

## Persuasive Letter Scoring Rubric

Parents, students and teachers can use the following rubric to rate persuasive letters designed to influence world leaders.

| <b>Persuasive Letter Scoring Rubric</b> |  |
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| <b>Score</b>                            | <b>Characteristics of Piece</b>  |
| <b><i>Above<br/>Average</i></b>         | <p>You have definitely taken a stand on the issue that we are studying—and you’ve supported your position with some of the most convincing points that I’ve ever seen! It would be impossible for readers to be unmoved by your writing because you’ve focused on concepts that are likely to be convincing to everyone. More importantly, you’ve addressed all of the “complaints” that opponents are likely to have with your point of view, detailing the flaws in their thinking and/or leaving readers convinced to move forward anyway.</p> <p>I’m really impressed by the evidence that you’ve found to persuade your readers. You’ve done a great job balancing statistics, star statements and stories in your piece, and your evidence works together nicely, making your piece seem more like a story than a nonfiction letter on a controversial topic.</p> <p>Your writing is also top-notch. It is clear and easy to understand, with no spelling or grammar errors. Your paragraphs are all approachable—none are too long and none are too short—and your use of varied sentence lengths, figurative language, and interesting vocabulary makes your piece fun to read.</p> <p><b><i>Overall, your piece changed the way that I feel about this issue.</i></b> Not only am I convinced that I need to take action, I’m convinced that I need to get others involved in taking action, too. This is a topic that is too important to be overlooked.</p> |
| <b><i>Average</i></b>                   | <p>You have definitely taken a stand on the controversial issue that we are studying—and more importantly, you’ve supported your position with several good points. Readers will be able to follow your thinking and will probably be nodding their heads in agreement as they work through your piece because you’ve focused on important concepts that matter.</p> <p>In places, you’ve done a good job using convincing evidence—statistics, star statements and stories—to persuade your readers. In other places, though, you make statements that are not backed up with evidence. While the reader might be able to guess at why the points you are making matter, the best persuaders never make their readers “fill in the blanks.”</p> <p>While there’s nothing particularly fancy about your sentence structure or vocabulary, there are few mechanical errors in your piece that are going to leave your readers confused. Your writing is solid—and that means you’ve done a good job communicating with readers.</p> <p><b><i>Overall, your piece convinced me that this issue mattered</i></b>—and that your point of view makes sense. I’m not sure that I have enough information to convince me to take action yet, but I definitely want to know more and will probably research on my own.</p>   |
| <b><i>Needs<br/>Improvement</i></b>     | <p>I’m not sure I know what your point of view is on the issue that we’re studying in class. I struggled to follow your thinking and I’ll bet that other readers will struggle, too. I wish that you had focused on a few key points and think that the ideas you have shared wander. They just don’t fit together very well in my mind.</p> <p>I’m also not sure that you’ve chosen the most convincing evidence for your piece. While you’ve included a few statistics, star statements and stories, they don’t always seem connected to the topic that we are studying. What’s more, the bits of evidence that you’ve included that do connect to our topic don’t seem very important to me.</p> <p>Some of my biggest struggles, though, were caused by grammar and spelling mistakes. At times, just understanding your writing was a chore. I felt like I was working really, really hard to make sense out of your piece—and readers who have to work hard to understand are probably not going to be persuaded.</p> <p><b><i>Overall, your piece didn’t convince me that this issue mattered.</i></b> I can’t imagine that I’m going to go take any action based on what I’ve read.</p>  |

